



True Stories

Making natural soap with dedication to a long family tradition: meet Patounis



Apostolos Patounis, co-founder of Patounis

My name is Apostolos Patounis and I studied mechanical engineering at King's College London. My family has a five-generation history in traditional soap manufacture. From a very young age, I was intrigued by the craftsmanship of soap making, so after a short career in the construction industry, I returned home to join the family business. I practised next to my father, who was a chemical engineer by profession, for nine years before taking over the business in 2004.

NATRUE: How was Patounis born? What makes you special?

Apostolos: In the early 19th century two families from Greece, Bazakis, and Patounis, learned how soap was made through trade relations with Marseille. In 1850 they established their first soap manufacture on the island of Zakynthos. In 1891, at the peak of its operation, the business was expanded by building a second soap factory in Corfu. In the 1930s the two families divided the operation. The Bazakis family stayed in Zakynthos, making soap until the 1970s. The Patounis family settled in Corfu, where they continue to make traditional soap in the original factory until today.

The family recipes, which have been passed on from father to son for five successive generations, are the secret of the unique quality of our product. Today, when people are turning to natural products, we respond by offering what should be considered the most important aspect of skin care, healthy cleansing. What makes our soap special is the natural aroma of pure unscented quality soap.

NATRUE: How do you define your soap? How important are the ingredients when making this product?

Apostolos: We make pure olive soap that covers all cleansing and cleaning needs. Only the basic raw material of soap manufacture is used with no additives: no fragrances, no essential oils, no colour, no chemicals. Our soap is made from naturally occurring oils, soda, sea salt, and water. The olive oil we use is exclusively of local origin, in order to maintain the character of our product and support small local producers.

NATRUE: Your manufacturing process is 100% by hand. Could you explain to us how you work?

Apostolos: We use the same method as always. The oil is saponified in open cauldrons and then washed out with sea salt solutions. After about ten days of processing, the soap is hand-scooped into wooden trays where it is left to cool and solidify. It is then marked, stamped and cut, all by hand. Finally, it is placed on wooden racks to dry and mature for 4 months. After quality control, the soap is ready for use.



NATRUE: What is the value of the NATRUE Label for Patounis?

Apostolos: Today many products are launched as natural. It is therefore important for a respected and widely recognized body such as NATRUE to exist, in order to certify real natural products and hence protect the consumer. With regards to our company, NATRUE certification will help us gain the recognition of consumers who care about these issues in new markets beyond our traditional territory.



For more information about Patounis, visit <https://www.patounis.gr/>